

Australian Garden HISTORY

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The Canberra scene
Bligh's tomb
Two Ivanhoe brothers



Snippets

Happy anniversary to a system garden

A hundred and sixty years ago the fiery Irish-born professor and museum director Frederick McCoy began creating a botanic garden in the grounds of the University of Melbourne.

McCoy had been at the University of Cambridge in the mid-1840s, cataloguing fossils. The university's botanic garden with herbaceous 'systematics beds' was designed and planted from 1846. (It is now an English Grade II* heritage landscape – these are classed as Grade I, Grade II* or Grade II.)

McCoy became Professor of Geology and Mineralogy and curator of the museum at Queen's College, Belfast, in its opening year, 1849, and took up a position at the University of Melbourne in the mid-1850s. Although he did not call the university's botanic garden a system garden, he was a keen devotee of systematics – the idea of arranging scientific subjects in a systematic manner. He saw his garden as a place 'for popular improvement and general scientific instruction'.

The garden declined from the 1880s. Alfred Ewart, government botanist and foundation professor of botany at the university, prevented building from taking place on its land in the early 20th century. Today, most of the system garden has been built over, and only the central part has survived. Though the term *system garden* is not in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, it has been used for McCoy's garden since about that time.

The University of Melbourne is not the only Victorian university to have something called a 'system' or 'systems' garden. In the 1970s Monash University created a systems garden on its campus of predominately native Australian plants. It features both native species and plants from around the world, labelled and grouped according to their botanical families. After its 2009 refurbishment this garden now harvests rainwater which is used for irrigation and in the cisterns of neighbouring buildings. A bat's wing coral tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*) growing there, far south of its natural habitat in northern Australia, is noted as a significant tree by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Thanks to Trevor Pitkin for inspiring this Snippet, and to Gwen Pascoe for helpful comments.



A view of the system garden, University of Melbourne
Photo: Trevor Pitkin, 2016



Northern part of the system garden, University of Melbourne
Photo: Trevor Pitkin, 2016

Cover: Stephanie Haygarth, *Home on the range* 2015, acrylic on paper, 94.5 x 75 cm. Private collection, reproduced courtesy of the artist.

The street tree plantings of Australia's capital Canberra, our host city for the 2016 AGHS national conference, form a striking cultural landscape. They were a result of scientific endeavour, and the plantings were often also an experiment in themselves. Matthew Higgins (page 12) writes of the freedom that botanist Lindsay Pryor had in selecting species for public plantings in the city. Streets like the one shown in Canberra artist Stephanie Haygarth's evocative painting were planted during Pryor's time as head of ACT Parks and Gardens in the 1940s and 1950s.

Guest editorial

Margie Bourke
Chair, AGHS 2016
conference committee



*The home gardener is part scientist,
part artist, part philosopher,
part ploughman.*

John R Whiting

As part of the lead-up to AGHS's annual conference on 14–16 October 2016, this issue features stories on the history of Canberra's development and landscaping, and on its significant landscapes and gardens. There will be more to come in the July issue of the journal.

Following Adelaide's themed exploration of 'Garden to Table', the topic for the Canberra conference is 'The Scientist in the Garden'. Science has played a pivotal role in the history of gardening in Australia. The year 2016, for example, marks the 200th anniversary of the foundation of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, the first scientific institution in the country.

Science has also had a major influence on the design and landscaping of Canberra. From the time of Canberra's establishment in 1913, both Walter Burley Griffin and his horticulturist Charles Weston took a scientific approach in experimenting with what tree species were best suited to growing on the Limestone Plains. The early scientific institutions based in Canberra were concerned with forestry and plant science, as were CSIR Plant Industry, and later still, the Australian National Botanic Gardens which researches native species in all parts of Australia.

As home gardeners we are all scientific experimenters trying to ascertain what we can grow best in our climate zone, our soil type and aspect, and of course meeting the challenge of water, or lack of it. At the October conference, experts will be providing insights into the history of all these challenges.

Garden visits will include the National Arboretum Canberra, Government House, an inspiring large suburban native garden, and a selection of rural property gardens within the commuter belt surrounding Canberra.

We look forward to welcoming you to Canberra during our glorious spring.



Contents

- 4** LENORE COLTHEART
Produce from history's
backyard
- 8** GREG WOOD
Growing a garden city
from scratch
- 12** MATTHEW HIGGINS
Lindsay Pryor: planting
the capital
- 16** MAX BOURKE
John Gray – a life in
trees and parks
- 18** CHRISTOPHER
WOODWARD
Captain Bligh's tomb
- 21** TIM GATEHOUSE
Two brothers and their
gardens
- 26** SANDRA PULLMAN
The Bishopscourt
Corroboree Tree

- 29** For the bookshelf
- 31** Letter to the editor
- 31** Dialogue

- 32** AGHS news
- 33** PROFILE: John Maurer
- 34** Diary dates
- 36** CAROLINE GRANT
West Australian Urban
Forest Masterclass



Lenore Coltheart

Produce from history's backyard

Lanyon's food gardens included the orchards and the 1940s terraced vegetable gardens shown in this 1980s aerial view.

Photo: David Dolan (1986)
150 years: Lanyon 1835–1985,
AGPS Canberra (detail)

Investigating food gardening in Australia since 1788 means peering into the backyard of history – try finding 'vegetable', let alone 'turnip', in the index of any history book. Despite this, food gardens are a very rich source in digging up the past. They reveal everyday details of who actually 'mixed their labour with the soil' and of the food grown and eaten. The focus of this article is two rural properties on the southern tablelands of New South Wales. Like all the older pastoral holdings in most parts of Australia, Lanyon and Tuggeranong have a direct debt to convict labour, established under the assignment system integral to pastoral occupation.

Australia's first garden of introduced food plants was dug just three days after the first colony was founded on 26 January 1788. In spring 1789, with food supplies desperately needed,

Governor Phillip reported that the oranges, figs, apples and grapevines he had brought from Brazil were flourishing, though the only yield then would have been the cauliflowers and French beans and strawberries from Cape of Good Hope. This prominent food garden featured in contemporary sketches of Sydney Cove.

A decade later, Government House displayed an ornamental setting rather than its rows of vegetables. As Georgian and Regency villas blossomed around Sydney Harbour, food gardens moved to the back, as Joseph Lycett's 1822 view of John Piper's Henrietta Villa shows. In the 1830s Thomas Macquoid's elegant new hilltop mansion above Woolloomooloo similarly had food gardens concealed behind grapevines grown from cuttings from his friend Hannibal Macarthur's Parramatta estate.

In the 1820s the expanding property portfolios of such men included at least one country estate, whether granted or purchased. By the 1830s, squatters and landowners had extended grazing as far south as the Murrumbidgee River, the

boundary of the southernmost of the colony's 19 counties. James Wright was living on his Lanyon station, while Thomas Macquoid had an overseer on his neighbouring Waniassa (later Tuggeranong). As colonial Sheriff, Macquoid visited this and his other properties, but it was his sister Alecia and son Hya who lived at the small homestead on the high southern bank above the deepest section of Tuggeranong Creek. They had grapevines and a vegetable garden, with an orchard to the east that included almond and cherry trees. His attempted sale in 1840 to acquit his father's debts recorded the homestead's 'excellent garden well stocked with the choicest fruit trees' as well as the property's 'many assigned servants'.

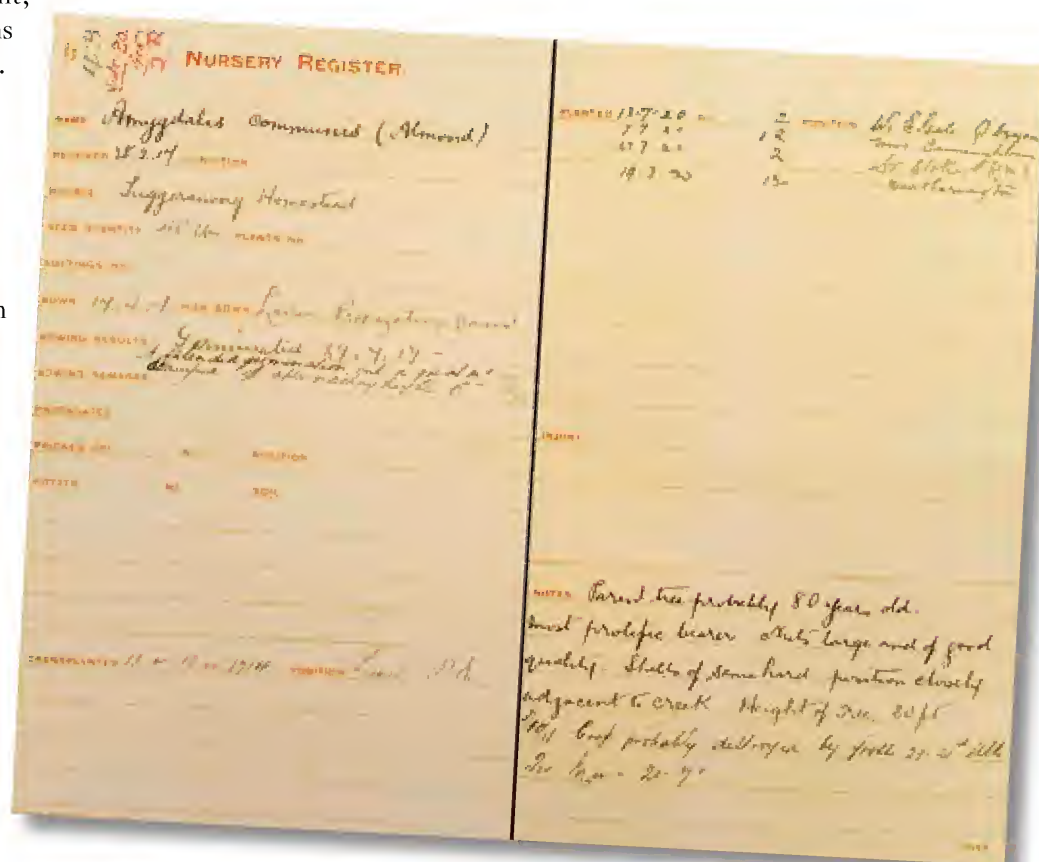
The households at Lanyon and Waniassa – family, employees and convicts alike – depended on the food they could grow or hunt; in 1840 a fair trip for bullock teams from Sydney could take six weeks. At Lanyon James Wright's new wife Mary, a keen gardener, took charge of the vegetable garden and orchard next to their slab hut on the river flat, helped by Irish couple Michael and Elizabeth Gallagher. The fenced food garden remained on the river flat after the Wrights' stone homestead was built higher up, a typical pattern for rural food gardens.

The Wrights were among the casualties of the 1840s pastoral downturn and Andrew and Jane Cunningham acquired Lanyon as NSW acquired its first, grazier-dominated, legislature. Waniassa remained Hya Macquoid's home until his accidental death in 1857, when Andrew Cunningham purchased and renamed the flourishing sheep station. His 1860 advertisement for a 'good gardener' at Lanyon suggests the grand plans in progress there.

Australia's 'Federation garden' hierarchy of ornament, recreation and utility, with food plants in the last category, had an antecedent in the pastoral 'long boom' style modelled at Lanyon with an imposing entrance drive to its new 1859 homestead, featured like many other newly landscaped estates in the *Sydney Illustrated News* (1869). The shift of the entrance

enabled the northern gardens to be enclosed for the orchard which was then established there, with 100 fruit trees purchased in 1879 planted within a hawthorn hedge. This walled area included a well-used lawn, a strawberry bed, gooseberry patch and flourishing grapevines. At Tuggeranong, earlier hawthorn hedging on the site of Macquoid's orchard was pleached, possibly the work of skilled hedge-layer Michael Gallagher, farming on Macquoid's station in the 1850s.

Lanyon's river flat food gardens were continually augmented with new varieties, such as the plants raised from a tomato Andrew Cunningham had surreptitiously pocketed from a neighbour's luncheon table. Lanyon was among the many rural properties to benefit from the post-goldrush availability of Chinese gardeners, who won prizes at the Queanbeyan Show for



Lanyon's parsnips, turnips, cabbage and celery.

After their father's death in 1887, Andrew and Jim ran Lanyon and Tuggeranong. From the time of their marriage two years later, Mary and Jim Cunningham lived at Tuggeranong. Their first enterprise was a new orchard on the northern side of the creek. Like her father Edward Twynam at Goulburn's Riversdale, Mary Cunningham delighted in working in the garden. An asparagus clump at Tuggeranong still

Charles Weston's record of his propagation of stock from the Tuggeranong homestead almond tree. Weston's Yarralumla Nursery propagation cards were digitised in 2011 as a Canberra Centenary project of the AGHS ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch (see vol 24 no. 4), and are available online at www.archives.act.gov.au

signals this shared love, with asparagus crowns recorded amongst her many plantings from her father's garden.

In 1908 the Cunninghams and their eight children moved into their new home, extended eastward into the embrace of two 10-metre tall almonds on the creek bank. The children spent hours among 'the gnarled branches of the big almond trees that shade the flower-filled courtyard from the morning sun'. Trees offering beauty and utility included the pomegranate near the cellar door, painted by Emily Twynam on a visit to her daughter's new house not long before the artist's death in 1910.

The acquisition of land within the borders of the Federal Capital Territory from 1911 included both Lanyon and Tuggeranong, with the latter targeted for immediate use. After his brother's death in 1913, James and Mary Cunningham vacated Tuggeranong and moved to Lanyon. Mary Cunningham continued to collect the seasonal bounty of her Tuggeranong garden, as well as planting stock for her new garden at Lanyon. Her additions there included a large and very abundant strawberry patch that was still bountiful 70 years later, after Lanyon was resumed. Its productivity proved fatal: the government's gardener dug it up because it was 'too much of a temptation for the kiddies' visiting the newly public historic place.

In June 1916 on her return from a stay at the Australian army base in Egypt, Mary Cunningham had the harvest of the Tuggeranong almond trees despatched to the troops there. The following autumn Charles Weston – an official gleaner, in his job of finding plants to create a 'garden city' – collected the hard-shelled nuts from the 'most prolific' of the two trees by the creek, that he judged 'probably 80 years old'. Weston became friends with official war historian Charles Bean, who lived at Tuggeranong homestead from 1919; Weston's dating of the tree piqued his interest; he calculated that Hya Macquoid would have been responsible for its planting. Bean's marriage to Queanbeyanite Ethel Young in 1921 gave him – and us – the invaluable observation of her grandmother, that the almonds had 'always been there' in her long lifetime. Charles Weston's impeccable records show that in 1920 Mary Cunningham received 12 of the seedlings propagated at Yarralumla Nursery; the almond grove proved her last work at Lanyon, with Jim Cunningham's death in 1921.



Until the Commonwealth terminated the leaseholds in the 1970s for the expansion of Canberra, the McCormack family ran Tuggeranong as a grazing property once more, while Lanyon from 1930 was part of the TA Field grazing empire. The Field family home was then at Randwick, with their gardener Fred Russell tending a 5-acre food garden nearby to supply the household from a poultry run, a cow, vegetable plots and fruit trees. Fred Russell visited Lanyon in 1933 to train George Nano, a fast learner who set up his successful market garden in Queanbeyan.

Despite the encroachment of Canberra's southern suburbs, for 50 years the Tuggeranong food gardens provided produce for the McCormacks, with fruit in such abundance some seasons that boxfuls were given away. A major change at Lanyon was the 1949 transfer of the vegetable gardens from the 115-year-old riverside site to terraced plots built next to the orchard, within the homestead's hawthorn-walled northern garden. These terraced beds were filled with alluvial soil carted up from the river flat over weeks by Lanyon's legendary drayman Fred Doolan, and fertilised with the manure that exists in abundance on every sheep station. Thirty years later, the government's first head gardener admired the rich loam where 'you can go down there three feet to beautiful sandy soil'. The



Tuggeranong homestead in the 1890s, showing the productive pair of almond trees then 50 years old.

Photo: Tuggeranong collection, courtesy Jenny Horsfield



These Lanyon almond grove survivors still keep the secret of their history.

Photo: L. Coltheart, 2015

major project of relocating the vegetable gardens shows that even postwar, the produce of the food gardens was an entitlement to Lanyon's workers — its 'household' — in addition to discounted meat provided under industrial awards.

The exchange of plants between friends and family raises intriguing horticultural as well as historical questions, such as whether the grapevines at Tuggeranong planted by Hya Macquoid were from his father's garden and can

thus be traced to the Macarthurs, the first family of Australian pastoral history. Historic food garden research not only provides a basis for assessment and conservation of vulnerable elements like Mary Cunningham's almond grove at Lanyon, but offers new insights into everyday life by looking into the backyard of Australian historiography.

Dr. Lenore Coltheart is a historian working on the identification and interpretation of heritage places that enhance understanding of everyday life.



Greg Wood

Growing a garden city from scratch

Left: Canberra federal site from Rottenbury trig station, city series, b&w photograph, 1910. Lands and Surveys Branch, Department of Home Affairs.
National Library of Australia, PIC/8470/1-16
LOC Album 300, nla.obj-140778713

Right: 1910 contour map (detail) by Charles Scrivener, used by contestants in the design competition for Canberra. Scrivener removed from it all existing buildings except St John's Church, but suggested places he thought suitable for orchards.
Archives ACT
TLI 104#01 FCT [Federal Capital Territory]

Many design and topographical considerations influenced the selection of a site for Australia's capital and the nature of the resulting city. The process involved Royal Commissions, extensive survey works and an international competition.

Choosing a site

Writing two years after he reported to the New South Wales Government on potential sites for Australia's national capital, Alexander Oliver, the President of the NSW Land Appeals Court, was reflecting on his experience.

In the course of my inspections nothing struck me as more remarkable than the unswerving loyalty of the witnesses to their climates. No matter what the day temperature might be, the nights were always cool, and if the districts rejoiced in a steady sequence of seasonable frosts, the inhabitants were all the better for them, like the soil under their feet ... Medical men came, looked, and went away disheartened; or, if they stayed, became poultry farmers or cultivated an orchard or a vineyard. An immense pumpkin chased me round several sites. It was a silent witness to climate as well soil, and not being liable to cross-examination did yeoman's service.

Oliver's Royal Commissions received over 40 site proposals from proud local communities, inspected 23, and took public evidence under oath at 14. His thoughtful report, published in October 1900 just before Federation, first spelt out the considerations affecting site selection. It did not decide the issue, a decade passing until finally Canberra was chosen by the Commonwealth Parliament.

Many aspirant sites were eliminated by the Australian Constitution's constraint requiring the capital to be in NSW but at least 100 miles from Sydney. Also, to be feasible, a site had to jump some difficult hurdles; local enthusiasm, even when supported by a high-profile political advocate, could only take you so far. Crucially, it had to have an adequate supply of water, not only to meet the needs of a sizeable and growing city for domestic uses, but for crops, parks, gardens and even ornamental lakes. Desirably there would be sufficient water to generate hydro-electricity nearby, as long-distance transmission of electricity was then impractical. Dalgety, surprisingly selected by both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament in 1904, had as its strongest selling point its location on the Snowy River with water in abundance. Site topography had to allow for good drainage and sewerage.

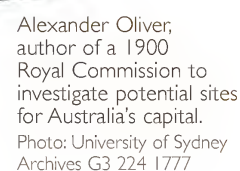
Again, any site was the better for having building materials locally available: stone, brick-making ingredients and timber. 'Accessibility' was another

All these considerations came at a significant cost, as did acquiring any privately owned land in the capital territory.

Aesthetic considerations – choosing a beautiful and impressive location for parks, gardens, lakes – really only came into play once the compelling practicalities had been met, though gradually awareness of the growing international regard for the idea of a ‘garden city’ gained traction in Australia, alongside the often disparaging references to a ‘bush capital’.

Every community petitioning Oliver claimed their site was capable of growing every conceivable crop and fruit, but few spoke of vistas, beauty, parks, and gardens. The submission from Yass was an exception:

European and native trees flourish well throughout the district and with the almost unlimited water supply to be obtained the formation of beautiful parks and ornamental gardens surrounding public buildings is rendered comparatively



Canberra map by Arthur L Lloyd and Walter Liberty Vernon, 1906. First map devoted to depicting a national capital site called "Canberra".

National Archives of Australia



easy. Among other species we particularise the oak, elm, poplar, plane, pepper, and willow trees, also many varieties of pine. All these flourish well at Yass. The equable climate favours also the growth of all garden plants even under the present disadvantage of want of irrigation. Among fruits, the apple, pear, cherry, plum, walnut, grape and fig bring their produce to perfection.

Oliver, almost as an afterthought, included the opinion of leading architects, engineers and surveyors who advised him that the site:

Should be a stretch of gently undulating country, the slopes of which of sufficient fall for drainage purposes, and admitting the construction of streets of easy grade – should, if contiguous to a river, be out of the reach of floods and free from fogs. Gently rising ground, containing a few depressions readily convertible into small lakes, and the site itself surrounded by commanding hills – preferably in the form of an amphitheatre or rather semi-amphitheatre would probably satisfy the conditions indicated and present the artistic features essential for the development of a really beautiful city ... The creation and maintenance of the artificial lakes ... should constitute a leading feature of its public gardens ... It would be advantageous for the city to have a north-easterly aspect, and it should be well sheltered.

In late 1908, famously, Home Affairs Minister Hugh Mahon instructed the surveyor Charles Scrivener to find a site for ‘a beautiful city, occupying a commanding position with extensive views and embracing distinctive features which will lend themselves to the evolution of design worthy of the object, not only for the present, but for all time’. Which, of course, he did. In 1909 Scrivener’s report described the Canberra site in terms very close to those that Oliver’s advisers used in 1900. Walter Burley Griffin, after first visiting the site in 1913, saw his city design in relation to the landscape, in these terms:

Taken altogether, this site may be considered as an irregular amphitheatre – with Ainslie in the north-east in the rear, flanked on either side by Black Mountain and Pleasant Hill, all forming the top galleries; with the slopes to the water, the auditorium; with the waterway and flood basin, the arena; with the southern slopes reflected in the basin, the terraced stage and setting of monumental government structures sharply defined rising tier on tier to the culminating highest internal forested hill of the Capitol; and with Mugga Mugga, Red Hill and the blue distant mountain ranges, sun reflecting, forming the back scene of the theatrical whole.

The native flora

Rarely, if ever, were Australian native species mentioned other than to list the varieties of timber available locally for building and construction. Interestingly, that too changed with time. In 1903, at the request of a subsequent Commonwealth Royal Commission, the Director of the Sydney Botanical Gardens, JH Maiden, provided lists of native trees and shrubs found at the eight sites then being assessed. In 1906, WL Vernon, the New South Wales Government Architect, who was spruiking a site called Mahkoolma, adjacent to the proposed Burrinjuck Dam near Yass, wrote that:

The native scrub which clothes the ranges, and in some more sheltered spots develops scenery of a forest character, should be conserved, and the opportunity is taken to deplore the indiscriminate ring-barking which has denuded thousands of acres of foliage.

Sydney Department of Lands sketch map showing proposed Federal Territory and capital site at Queanbeyan, 1900. National Library of Australia nla.obj-233896822





Unwisely, Vernon provided visiting parliamentarians with graphic photographs of ugly ringbarked trees, reducing whatever chance Mahkoolma had of winning their approval, already teetering after their meal tent was blown away during a downpour and their coaches bogged on a deserted road. It was then that Canberra emerged as a serious site contender, visited by the same delegation, on a crystal clear frosty day when the air was like ‘a draft of champagne’.

Its beautiful mountain backdrop aside, contemporary illustrations make clear the Canberra site was bare pastoral country ‘due more to climatic factors than the activities of man’. To have a bush capital you would first need to grow the bush. Funding was secured for afforestation before the Commonwealth Government formally took over the Territory on 1 January 1911, and before the international design competition that Burley Griffin won. Charles Scrivener sought advice from Maiden as to what native species would best suit the Canberra area, Maiden strongly advocating planting of both native and exotic varieties. To buffer the site from strong westerly winds Maiden recommended planting breaks of *Pinus insignis* (radiata pine).

The hope that WR Guilfoyle, head of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, would advise on the ‘afforestation’ of the federal territory

founded with his failing health. Charles Weston was approached in his stead. He first visited the Federal Territory in April 1911 and recommended a provisional nursery at Acton, protected by windbreaks and rabbit-proof fencing. Two years later he established a larger permanent nursery at Yarralumla. Weston hoped this would form part of the formal city plan as ‘the nursery itself [could] be so planned as to be an added ornament to the city. For there is no reason why an establishment set apart for raising, testing, and growing of all kinds of trees, shrubs and plants, should not be made a place of beauty, interest, and instruction.’

Like Scrivener, Walter Burley Griffin, on arrival, became an enthusiastic advocate of Australian flora, though not to the exclusion of all exotics. The planting of over 100,000 sequoias near what is now Canberra airport testifies to this (a few still survive), as does a cork oak plantation on the ‘European African border’ of his proposed arboretum. The careful, professional, scientifically inclined Weston was recurrently vexed by Burley Griffin’s requests that he plant unsuitable varieties – but that’s another story.

View from summit of Mount Ainslie, 1912, watercolour in three parts (detail), submitted to Commonwealth of Australia Federal Capital competition by Walter Burley Griffin.

National Archives of Australia
NAA A710, 48

Using original documents, **Greg Wood** has been researching Canberra’s selection as the site of Australia’s national capital. He has a long unrequited fascination with history and includes historical cartography among his many interests.



Matthew Higgins

Lindsay Pryor: planting the capital

Eucalypts dominate the streetscape in Dampier Crescent, Forrest.
Photo: Matthew Higgins

If you travel to the top of Mt Ainslie, you get a superb view over Canberra, Australia's national capital. You can see the lake, many of the big national institutions, the mountains in the distance. But there seems to be something missing. Where are all the houses and smaller buildings? Well, they're there, but they are behind all the greenery. That is one of the wonders of Canberra, and one of the people who shaped this green miracle of the bush capital was Lindsay Pryor.

Lindsay Pryor, born in 1915 at Moonta, South Australia, studied forestry in Adelaide and Canberra. He worked as a forester in the ACT high country from the mid-1930s, and in 1944 became Superintendent (later Director) of Parks

and Gardens in the national capital, a position he held until 1958 when he became Professor of Botany at the Australian National University.

I had the good fortune to interview Lindsay three times. The first was in 1990 and concerned some of his forestry and botanical work in the Brindabella Range (where Pryor's Hut still stands today). The third in 1994 was in connection with the Brindabella arboreta and the Bulls Head logging settlement. The second, on which this article is based, was a 1992 series of oral history recordings totalling nine hours, focusing on his work in the Parks and Gardens role.

When Lindsay took up this position there was no training in landscape architecture in Australia, and so it was not surprising that he, like several of his successors, came from a forestry background. The Canberra that he knew in 1944 was a city of starts

and stops. Officially named in 1913, Canberra began to be built only to be affected almost immediately by World War I. After the war, progress resumed and Parliament House opened in 1927. Then came the Depression, and a few years later, World War II.

Canberra's landscape design and planting followed this roller-coaster ride. The first city planter was Thomas (TCG) Weston, a hugely gifted and energetic man who began the enormous task of planting out the open spaces, institutional areas, suburban streets and hills of early Canberra. In doing so he had to interpret and implement the ideas of city designer Walter Burley Griffin, some of which were inspired, and some mistaken. According to Lindsay, the Parliamentary Triangle plantings of Canberra owe more to Weston than to Griffin. Following Weston came AE Bruce, then John Hobday. The Bruce–Hobday period of the late 1920s until the early 1940s was affected by shortages, and there was relatively little progress.

1944

When Lindsay arrived, Canberra was ready for expansion of its green landscape and he was enthusiastic about the task. 'I was determined to plant', he told me.

Lindsay gained inspiration and ideas from significant overseas trips in 1946 and 1947. The 1946 trip to Japan led him to incorporate Japanese design styles into such places as the Australian National University's John Curtin School of Medical Research. The later pruning of plane trees in the inner south of the city at Manuka also owed a lot to pruning techniques he had observed in Japan. His sparing use of accent in design came from Japan, and in both Japan and Europe, he saw the devastation wrought by war.

In 1947 he visited the United States and Europe, taking particular note of Washington as a planned national capital, and of landscape design around cultural institutions there and elsewhere. He was able also to look at regions with climatic and topographic parallels to Canberra and get ideas about species selection — the use of Arizona ash (*Fraxinus velutina*) in Canberra was one result. In Britain he saw the large estate gardens of Capability Brown, and the garden city sites that had so influenced Weston. In France and Italy he observed the more formal garden designs like Versailles that he concluded were less suitable for Canberra. In Spain he was impressed by use of the Japanese pagoda tree (*Sophora japonica*) that had been little planted in Canberra at that time. Scandinavia gave him ideas about botanic gardens.

The Parks and Gardens section

Back in Canberra, one thing that was lacking was machinery. When Lindsay became director of Parks and Gardens, there was only one tractor. Making use of the resources that instantly flowed when several royal visits were planned, he was able to build up the machinery, replacing horses that had been used in earlier days, and the work force. Coal strikes in the late 1940s also made unemployed men available for work. Though several of the royal visits were cancelled, the money had already been spent well.

Lindsay was a confident man with a strong work ethic. He had a hands-on style and was always out with the men when new planting was being planned. He knew well the cold mornings when planting was so often undertaken. He also knew all 250 workers 'by name and by sight'.

His preference for the informal in design saw him conceive of a plan in parks and other open spaces where he would use a circle of trees with a tree in the centre. Though geometrical, the formality is not visible and the result looks informal. You can see it in a number of areas of older Canberra today.

Lindsay used a mix of exotics and natives. His main objective was simply to use the plants which performed best. Though he is remembered by many as an expert botanist of the eucalypts, he used exotics widely in Canberra's landscape. Deciduous trees were significant for letting in winter sunshine. He was later concerned about what he saw as the overzealous use of natives from the 1970s onward and felt that in places like the National Gallery sculpture garden, there were risks in using native plant material which hadn't been sufficiently developed for horticultural use.

The idea of a Canberra botanic garden had been around since early years and Dr BT Dickson's report on such a garden was known. But it was under Lindsay that the gardens (now the Australian National Botanic Gardens) were first developed. Renowned as a botanic garden devoted to Australian native plants, the Australian National Botanic Gardens weren't always that way. When started by Lindsay, there were some areas of exotic planting which have since been cropped from the current boundaries.

Water was always a constraint on Parks and Gardens in Lindsay's time, so it is significant that the Rainforest Gully wasn't able to be developed at the Australian National Botanic Gardens until after Lindsay's period when better irrigation was available. Recognising Canberra's and Australia's dry climate, Lindsay once wrote that 'green is



A



B



C

A Lindsay Pryor (left) with botanist Erwin Gauba, collecting plant material at Mt Kosciuszko in about 1950.

Photo courtesy Australian National Botanic Gardens

B Lindsay Pryor speaking at Pryor's Hut in the Brindabella Range, 1993.

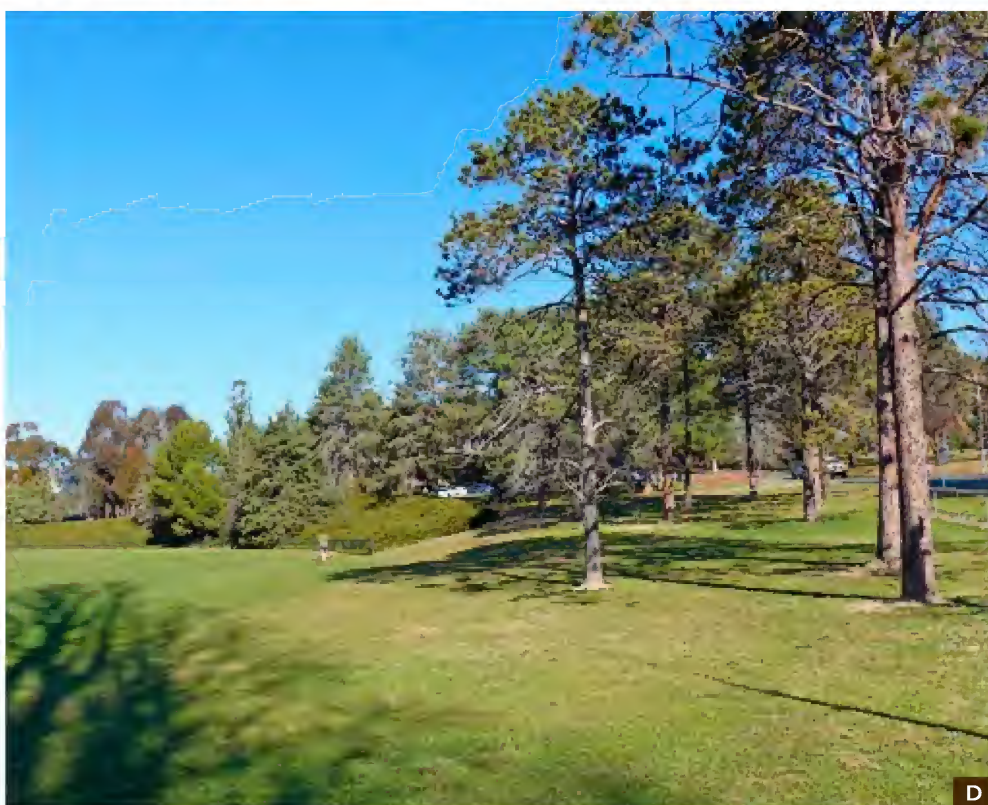
Photo: Matthew Higgins

C Pryor pioneered development of the Australian National Botanic Gardens. This eucalypt was planted in 1949 by Sir Edward Salisbury, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in a ceremony marking the formal commencement of the gardens.

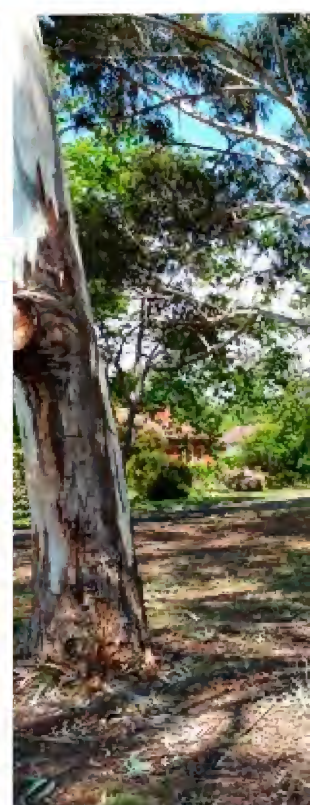
Photo: Matthew Higgins

D Pryor was very pleased with the result of his planting of the Forestry precinct at Yarralumla.

Photo: Matthew Higgins



D



not the only colour in the landscape', and he incorporated areas of dry grass into various areas of the city.

Sources for Canberra's plantings

In order to get native plant material, Lindsay undertook collecting trips with Austrian-born botanist Erwin Gauba. They travelled widely and camped out. This was the only way to get the material. As for exotic seed for other plantings elsewhere in Canberra, such as streets, sports fields and parks, and around buildings, Lindsay expanded beyond previously used firms like New Zealand's Cooper Brothers and used other traders, including Herbst Brothers in New York, Vilmorin in Paris, and Hilliers in the UK. Significantly, he also collected seed overseas from the wild when he had the opportunity.

Parks and Gardens' Yarralumla Nursery gave free trees and shrubs to gardeners, enabling the section to have some influence in private garden plantings. This represented an alternative to Canberra's commercial nurseries which Lindsay felt was a 'good move', as Yarralumla selections were very suitable for Canberra conditions.

When asked about favourite street tree arrangements in Canberra, Lindsay included Torrens Street in Braddon, Dampier Crescent in Forrest and Gunn Street in Yarralumla. In his own street tree plantings he sought successful form and uniformity of trees within streets, and variety on

the broader scale. He felt that the later replanting of Northbourne Avenue with *Eucalyptus elata* following the less successful *Eucalyptus blakelyi* was a great improvement. The use of stately bluegums (*Eucalyptus bicostata*) on Anzac Parade was successful for the way the size and form of the trees reflected the ceremonial and symbolic importance of the thoroughfare they flank. Lindsay had left Parks and Gardens by then but liaised with Dick Clough of the National Capital Development Commission on the choice.

Lake Burley Griffin

Just as the timbered inner hills around Canberra are a key element of the national capital's landscape (as recognised by Griffin; they saw much reforestation under Weston), so is Lake Burley Griffin. Lindsay headed Parks and Gardens when the future of the lake was very much a live issue, and was not impressed by those opposed to the lake's construction. A 1950s flood gave a visual idea of how the lake might look, and Lindsay took photos that were influential at the time. When the lake was built in the early 1960s he 'was delighted', seeing it suddenly on return from an overseas trip during which the basin had finally filled.

One 'painful operation', as he put it, resulting from the lake's development was the move of Royal Canberra Golf Course to Westbourne Woods. The Woods had been planted by Weston and were a major feature of the capital's greenery. Lindsay had to work to try to protect the Woods' integrity while allowing the golf course to be developed. He felt that the overall result, while unavoidably affecting public access, was very successful.

Another interesting challenge was in 1948 when Lindsay had to stand up to the Governor-General, the Duke of Gloucester, when the latter wanted the Deodar cedar in the Government House grounds felled. The 33-year-old Parks and Gardens head was up to the task and the magnificent Deodar survived!

As head of Parks and Gardens, he also believed firmly in renewing plantings as soon as signs of senescence or incurable disease were evident. Ageing Atlas cedar street trees were a case in point at the time of our interview, as had been Haig Park a few years earlier. Though tree removals required for this renewal can lead to public protest (given that members of the public are not always aware of the problems the trees are facing) it has to be done so as to avoid the necessity for clear-felling if the problem is allowed to persist for too long.



E The informality of the 'circle with a centre' is seen here in suburban Ainslie.

Photo: Matthew Higgins

One huge contrast between the Canberra of Lindsay's time and the Canberra of today is in the much closer development of new suburban enclaves such as Gungahlin and Molonglo. With smaller block sizes and many large houses in these recent areas there is little space left for major plantings, so that the streetscape is dominated by built forms rather than growing ones. Whereas the buildings of earlier Canberra fit within the green environment (as the view from Mt Ainslie shows), the new areas have a completely different aesthetic. Even allowing for the short space of time so far for the establishment of greenery in the new areas, they do contrast with earlier phases in the national capital's development. What Lindsay would have thought of the new town planning can only be guessed at, but I believe he would have been somewhat disappointed.

Lindsay's work ranged from big spaces like Telopea Park and the Forestry School grounds to small ones like embassies and advising on private gardens including that of the late Frank Fenner. Lindsay's own Red Hill garden was attractive too. While we recorded his memories in the winter of 1992, the beautiful call of an eastern spinebill rang out from the garden, and along with Lindsay's words it too is immortalised on the recordings.

Lindsay Pryor died in August 1998. The green capital that he and many others worked so hard to develop remains as his memorial.

Matthew Higgins is a Canberra historian and writer. The 1992 Lindsay Pryor project was undertaken under the auspices of the National Trust of Australia (ACT), with government heritage funding, and support from the National Library of Australia. The recordings are held by the library, and an indexed transcript is held by the National Trust.

Max Bourke

John Gray—a life in trees and parks

Dr John Gray OAM has been a significant force in the design and implementation of park and garden design in Canberra. He is a quiet man with a great sense of history and respect for the environment 'We can't afford to ignore the way in which this planet works', he says. 'We can't afford to ignore its natural ecosystems and the resources we're benefitting from.'

John was born in 1930 in Sydney. After accepting a cadetship from the NSW Forestry Commission in 1948, he spent two years at Sydney University and a further two at the Australian Forestry School in Yarralumla, Canberra. John went to the Queanbeyan and Bateman's Bay offices of the Commission, and worked with the Commission for five years before moving to the Forestry and Timber Bureau in Canberra to run their seed laboratory. Because there was high international demand for eucalypts globally after World War II, seed importing and exporting was a vigorous trade.

At this point John's career echoed that of Professor Lindsay Pryor, another forester turned parks manager. In 1961, 'still searching for something more challenging', John joined the Parks and Gardens Section of the Department of the Interior,

where he ran Canberra's landscape construction facility on behalf of the National Capital Development Commission. 'What was exciting was that the commission was starting work on the landscaping for the future Lake Burley Griffin, and I was working on delivering those projects', he says.

'I was responsible for the construction and the design work was being done by Richard Clough. He would bring out these drawings and we would meet in the field, look at the site and he would tell me what his concept was. This is completely different to the way it is done now, where detailed drawings are prepared and the exact position of every plant is on the drawing. I would try to understand his concept and then he would leave me to it. I would get one of my staff to bring a great chaff bag of poplar pegs with a slice cut out of each to write the name of the tree on it, and we would lay it out. I would say a circle of 16 *Populus nigra* 'Italica' (Lombardy poplar) here, and my staff member would order would order them from the Yarralumla Nursery and plant them up'.

During this period John worked on planting many of the significant areas of the national capital — particularly in the Parliamentary Triangle — and

new suburbs in the town centres of Belconnen and Woden Valley. Realising the importance of design, he did a Masters in landscape architecture at the University of California Berkeley. (He and his family arrived in the midst of US student peace and anti-war protests, and the smell of tear gas became quite familiar.)

He studied with landscape designer Garrett Ekbo (1910–2000), became interested in the ways in which people use public parks, and examined the redesign of a major park. He was an interested observer in radical student confrontation involving the People's Park near the Berkeley campus, a park created in 1969.

On his return to Australia John taught park management at the Canberra College of Advanced Education (now University of Canberra). He joined the National Capital Development Commission in 1974 to work again with Richard Clough, and succeeded him in 1980 as head of landscape architecture. He was very active in bodies like the Royal Australian Institute of Parks and Recreation (National President) and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. He stayed until the National Capital Development Commission was closed down in 1988. John has always had a sense of history, and the date he selected for retiring from the public sector was 11 November, chosen for its historical connotations. It is the day associated with the sacking of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, and the hanging of Ned Kelly!

As a private landscape consultant from 1988 till 1999 John worked on projects ranging from the Old Parliament House Gardens to the Australian War Memorial and Magna Carta Place northwest of Old Parliament House, all of which achieved many accolades. He has contributed much voluntarily, including work as a guide at Old Parliament House, and development of a public park with his friend Neil Inall, a former ABC rural broadcaster, at Currabubula in northern NSW. The park honours legendary rural broadcaster Lorna Byrne (1897–1989), who came from that place.

John's interest in history led to his first book, *The Glebe Park story* (1989), followed by another book on Commonwealth Park and a doctorate on his great predecessor, Canberra's first horticulturist, Charles Weston. He has had a broad impact on the urban designs of Canberra, and it is one still visible today.

Max Bourke AM is a former Deputy Chair of AGHS. He was trained in agricultural science and art history, and has been CEO of the Australian Heritage Commission and the Australia Council for the Arts.



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Canberra landscape designer John Gray in the gardens of Old Parliament House, 2016.

Photo: Bernadette Hince

John Gray's most recent book *Roses, tennis and democracy — the story of the Old Parliament House Gardens*, Canberra was published by the National Capital Authority in 2014. It traverses the ideas of the founding fathers of Australia about gardens for recreation and pleasure, as well as the travails of transferring the Federal Parliament from Melbourne to Canberra and the subsequent rise and fall – and rise, again – of the gardens surrounding (Old) Parliament House, which are now on the Commonwealth Heritage List. One of our own AGHS founders, Tamie Fraser, made a significant contribution mentioned in this book.

Printed copies are available from the author (9/146 Shackleton Circuit, Mawson, ACT 2607) for \$17.50 including postage within Australia. It is also available electronically at www.nationalcapital.gov.au/attachments/article/232/roses-tennis-democracy-2014-web.pdf.



Christopher Woodward

Captain Bligh's tomb

The Garden Museum churchyard, showing Bligh's tomb on the right.

©Sophie Mutevelia, courtesy of the Garden Museum

From the window of my office I can see the tombs of three plant-hunters: John Tradescant and his son, and Captain Bligh of the *Bounty*. My office is, in fact, the vestry of the old church of St Mary's at Lambeth in London, built beside the Thames in 1054, rebuilt by the Victorians, and in the 1970s rescued from demolition to become the world's first museum dedicated to garden history.

The plant-hunters' tombs

The first tomb was built by the widow of the younger Tradescant, also John, who sailed three times to Virginia in search of plants; at his death in 1662 his father — who had sailed to Russia and Africa — was placed beside him in the vault. Carved into its lid is a poem which celebrates

the achievements of the two men as collectors, antiquarians and 'gardeners to the Rose and Lily Queen' — that is, Queen Henrietta Maria, the gardener wife of King Charles I. 'Transplanted here themselves' — note the anonymous poet's metaphor — at the Day of Judgement they shall 'change this garden for a paradise'. The carved letters are mossy — we like them mossy — and I can hear visitors pick out the words in accents from all over the world.

From time to time I hear an Australian voice call out 'There's Captain Bligh!' And — the voice continues — 'The celebrated navigator / who first transplanted the bread fruit tree / from Otaheite to the West Indies'.

Why Australian visitors? Bligh is not just the commander in the most famous mutiny in naval history — played on screen by Charles Laughton, Trevor Howard and Anthony Hopkins — but

was appointed Governor of New South Wales in 1805, where he was unseated and imprisoned in a rebellion by the officers of the New South Wales militia. That is, of course, a complex episode in Australia's political history: was Bligh a 'tyrant', as claimed by the wealthy settlers whose land claims he disputed? Or was he an opponent of corruption, and a champion of the newer settlers, as evidenced – it is said – by the gravestones which record how his name was given to the children of the poor?

What is certain is that he is one of very people whose epitaph names a plant.

Bligh's *Bounty* voyage

The *Bounty* sailed to Tahiti to collect cuttings from the breadfruit trees, plants whose fruit was promoted as a 'miracle food' by Joseph Banks after his voyage to Tahiti with Captain Cook in 1769. The trees fruit prolifically and can be [stored] easily; sailors, enthused Banks, happily swapped biscuit for breadfruit.

When the War of Independence interrupted the supply of provisions from North America, up to 20,000 slaves in British plantations died of starvation. Plantation owners such as Duncan Campbell – uncle of Bligh's wife Betsy – quickened the search for a cheap crop. Campbell was also Superintendent of Convicts on the River Thames, and discussed with Banks the possibility of Australia as an alternative to the lost convict settlements in North America. As ever, the history of plants is inseparable from trade, empire, politics, and patronage.

Bligh had sailed on Cook's last – and fatal – voyage in 1777 and wrote that Tahiti was 'the Paradise of the world'. Paradise changes its meaning with each century. In the age of Christopher Columbus Eden was still a place marked on a map; on his third voyage he took a speaker of ancient Chaldean, whose words of greeting puzzled the [Indians] on the banks of the Orinoco. By Tradescant's time it was accepted that Eden had vanished, its plants scattered across the globe; they would be reunited in their garden of 'rarities' in Lambeth. Joseph Bank's vision of a garden at Kew which was a compendium of the flora of the King's empire was an Enlightenment extension of the same concept.

In Tahiti

Tahiti appeared to be a more fantastic Paradise: of sunshine, sexual freedom, and social playfulness – and, as Banks added, the breadfruit liberated the inhabitants from 'the curse of our forefathers': that is, since Adam's fall the need to sweat

food from the tilled soil. In her 2011 biography *Bligh*, Professor Anne Salmond of the University of Auckland applies the perspective of an anthropologist to reveal Bligh as a perceptive early ethnographer, making a serious and open-minded study of the structures and beliefs of the island communities. It was Bligh who understood the significance of the role of taio, or friend, applied to Cook and himself within a culture of spiritual power, and that women would have sex with the sailors because the red feathers they offered were a transference of that power; the figurehead of the *Bounty* was repainted in bright colours to play a



Tahitian variety loio of breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*), conserved in the collection of the Breadfruit Institute, Hawaii.

Photo: ©Jim Wiseman, courtesy of the Breadfruit Institute

'Transplanting of the bread-fruit-trees from Otaheite', painted and engraved by Thomas Gosse, 1796.

National Library of Australia an6016209



part in fertility rituals. *Maita'i vahine no Peretane!* exclaimed the Tahitians: 'What a fine woman from Britain!'

Bligh's horticultural diligence in watching the breadfruit cuttings take root lengthened the stay to five months, during which time discipline loosened. A second factor in the mutiny, Salmond argues, was that Banks's instruction to remodel the captain's cabin as a greenhouse required Bligh to sleep with the men; he had no space in which to calm his thoughts, reflect, and to assert authority over the officers.

It's often said that the men mutinied in protest at the breadfruit getting all the water. That, however, was on the second voyage when the *Providence* and *Assistant* sailed from Tahiti with 1281 pots on deck, and under the scorching sky of the west Pacific men licked drops from the gardener's watering can. This time Bligh had a cabin, and Marines. This was the voyage of 'the floating garden' as Midshipman Tobin dubbed a ship with plantains and coconuts growing up the rigging.

Adopting Bligh

The Garden Museum is hoping to find an adopter for Captain Bligh's tomb, which is Grade II* listed (particularly important buildings of more than special interest) and of international importance, but was damaged by bombs during World War II. When the Garden Museum reopens early in 2017, the bicentenary year of Captain Bligh's death, his tomb and that of the Tradescants will be centre-stage in the new cloister garden designed by Dan Pearson. Adoption will support the urgently required conservation, interpretation and lighting of the tomb.

See gardenmuseum.org.uk/page/garden-museum-development for details, or contact Kezia Evans:

- kezia@gardenmuseum.org.uk
- tel +44 207 401 8865



Artist's impression of the future garden and cloister, including the tombs of Bligh and the Tradescants.

Bligh's shipment of plants around the world was one of the great triumphs of transplantation in the age before the Wardian case. Despite that – and despite the heroic voyage of over three thousand miles in an open boat after the mutiny – Bligh was snubbed by the Admiralty on his return to London. He fought bravely beside Nelson – who praised him – at the bloody battle of Copenhagen, but in the end his life was defined by words, not blows. Bligh was a tongue-lasher, not a flogger, who throughout his career humiliated the officers in his command as 'scoundrels, damned rascals, hounds, hell-hounds, beasts, and infamous wretches', noted down Fletcher Christian's brother, a lawyer. By the time of his death, Christian – who exclaimed 'I am in hell!' on the morning of the mutiny – had become a Byronic hero of a popular poem. Bligh's inscription – a long one of the age – chiselled his side of the story into posterity.

The tomb is ornamented with Coade stone, a ceramic with the appearance of stone which was invented to a secret recipe at a factory in Lambeth, the parish in which the Bligh family lived (in a townhouse which is today a bed & breakfast, opposite the Imperial War Museum). The finial is not a breadfruit (how do you edit Wikipedia?) but an eternal flame, a standard component in the repertoire of neoclassical symbolism.

The extension for the Garden Museum will allow us to devote the interior of the church to six new galleries of garden history, displaying over a thousand artefacts and works of art which have not been on display before, together with the country's first archive of garden design. Designer Dan Pearson's concept is to create a cabinet of 'rarities', intriguing – as Tradescant did – with new and unusual species introduced by contemporary plant-collectors. We hope that Bligh would approve.

I'm grateful to the Australian visitors who made me curious about Captain Bligh. Personally, I'm ready for a new film about the *Bounty* – which would be the sixth since 1916. Russell Crowe was glimpsed visiting our neighbour the Archbishop of Canterbury for advice on how to play Noah; why not Captain Bligh? He is too tall for the role, but he might have the tongue.

Christopher Woodward, an art historian, is director of the Garden Museum and was formerly director of the Holburne Museum of Art, in Bath. He is the author of *In ruins*, and in support of the Museum's development appeal has swum the Hellespont, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Thames from Oxford to London.



Tim Gatehouse

Two brothers and their gardens

In Waterdale Road in the Melbourne suburb of Ivanhoe, a Moreton Bay fig tree, a small grove of peppercorns, and the bole of an ancient red gum stand wedged between the footpath and the car park of the Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre. They are the remnants of two luxuriant gardens established in the 1850s by Scottish settler brothers John Donaldson (1827–1905) and his brother James (1832–1916).

Their older brother Alexander and sister Isabella had arrived in Melbourne in 1840 to reconnoitre land on which the family could settle. The next year John and James, their parents James and Isabella, and another sister Margaret followed them and settled on 640 acres of land purchased at Kangaroo Ground, approximately 30 kilometres to the northeast of Melbourne. They named their property Kangaroo Hall.

Having both farming experience and capital, the Donaldsons soon achieved a modest prosperity, marred only by the occasional depredations of bushrangers. In 1850, in order to extend the family's holdings and facilitate the transport of their farm produce and cattle to the Melbourne markets, another property was purchased at Ivanhoe.

This comprised 102 acres, for which James Donaldson (senior) paid the substantial sum of 313 pounds. The land sloped gently from its eastern boundary on Waterdale Road to the Darebin Creek on the west. The northern boundary was the present line of Beatty Street, and on the south the present line of Ford Street. Shortly after the death of James (senior) in 1856, James (junior) and John Donaldson moved permanently to Ivanhoe, the rest of the family remaining at Kangaroo Hall.

John Donaldson's Ivanhoe residence Bellevue House, with lady in garden, late 19th century.

Courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society



Top: Bellevue House in 1958, shortly before demolition.

Middle: Wellington House, with aviary in foreground.

Bottom: Wellington House (detail of front of house).

Courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society

Wellington House

In that year a small house was constructed approximately 50 metres back from the Waterdale Road frontage. Named Wellington House, it comprised four rooms on the ground floor and two rooms upstairs, lit by dormer windows. The bluestone walls were white-washed. Apart from the encircling verandah, it was little different from the farmhouses with which the Donaldsons would have been familiar in their homeland. A letter written home to Scotland in 1857 describes the cosy wallpapered interior of the house, the substantial stone barn, stable and coach house, and the well, 18 feet deep and 15 feet in diameter, lined with stone and waterproofed with Roman cement.

This well provided drinking water and also irrigated the garden of just over two acres, which was laid out between the house and Waterdale Road. Some specimen trees were planted. The two front corners were marked by Moreton Bay fig trees, and a Norfolk Island pine was planted on the south side of the house. Other trees were planted or retained for their shade. Peppercorns were planted randomly around the front garden and farm buildings, and some eucalypts were kept in order to provide immediate shelter, or on account of their venerable age.

The garden was divided by a wide graveled path which led straight from the front gate to the front door. It was bordered by trees, massed shrubs and flowers. James Donaldson was a passionate gardener and propagator of plants. His favourites were pansies and peony roses, for which he won many prizes, and such was his enthusiasm that he even had pictures of them painted. Shade houses of laths nailed to wooden frames were built to grow ferns, as were arbours to support jasmine and wild roses. A chain of ponds following the fall of the land was made for water-loving plants. An orchard was established on sloping land behind the house, together with three netted enclosures for vines.

James Donaldson's interest in the natural world extended to birds and animals. Adjacent to the south end of his house, and almost its equal in size, was an aviary constructed of wire netting fastened over a wooden framework. The only information we have about the feathered inhabitants is that they were exotic. That being the case, the residents of the small menagerie James established in a clearing beside the orchard

were definitely not. A small family of kangaroos lived there for many years, one old man kangaroo reputedly assuming proprietorial rights over the fruit in respect of anyone attempting to pick any.

Bellevue House

In 1857 James Donaldson's brother John built his house on the portion of the Ivanhoe property left to him by his father. It was sited approximately 80 metres south of James's house, and a similar distance back from Waterdale Road. In contrast to James's Scottish-cottage-with-verandah style, John's house which he named Bellevue was of an impressive double-storey symmetrical design, constructed of finely cut bluestone, with a hipped slate roof, and a cast iron verandah across both levels of the front wall. At a later date a brick billiard room was added to the north side of the house, with long windows giving access to the garden. Weatherboard extensions at the back provided extra bedrooms for John Donaldson's large family which eventually numbered 16 children, although not all would have been living there at the same time.

John Donaldson's house, like the garden surrounding it, was of a grander design than that of his brother. Bellevue House was screened from the road by a high cypress hedge, and entered through gates opening into a broad graveled drive, which swept round to the right across the front of the house, then down past the billiard room to the stables at the rear. John shared his brother's love of birds, for directly in front of the house, and midway between the house and the front boundary was a huge circular aviary. Measuring 28 feet in diameter, the floor was sunk several feet below ground level and was accessed by a flight of steps.

The apex of the conical roof was 15 feet above the floor, beneath which was a stone-lined water tank which provided an unfailing supply of water to house and garden. The lawn surrounding the aviary was studded with flowerbeds. Further garden beds were laid out on either side of the house, and were accessed by brick paths.

The prize tree in the garden at Bellevue was an oak grown from an acorn collected in the park at Windsor Castle. This was just one of the botanical specimens brought back from Britain, when in 1889 James and John Donaldson, John's second wife Isabel, and their daughter Margaret made a tour of their homeland. Much



of their time in Scotland was spent visiting relatives, but throughout their travels, botanical gardens and plant nurseries were their most frequent destinations.

James Donaldson and his second wife Caroline Tiley, ca 1880s.
Courtesy Heidelberg Historical Society

A few historic sites such as the Tower of London were also included in their itinerary, but these took second place to the horticultural attractions. They were most impressed by the palm house at Kew Gardens – as much by the singing birds which inhabited it, as by the palms. It may well have been the inspiration for John Donaldson's circular aviary with the conical roof, a small-scale adaptation of the original grand design. In Edinburgh they visited the botanical gardens on several occasions, and also the Dundee cemetery on account of its garden setting. At Floors Castle, the seat of the Duke of Roxburghe south of Edinburgh, they were shown over the gardens, where they were particularly impressed by the hot houses, special praise being reserved for the 'magnificent' rhubarb.

MUNICIPALITY OF HEIDELBERG.



Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works plan, showing the Donaldson brothers' houses Wellington House and Bellevue House ('Belle-Vue') facing Waterdale Road.

MMBW detail, plan no. 2641

When they visited Glasgow the brothers' ornithological interests were well catered for by the natural history exhibits in the museum.

Sources of plants

However, their keenest interest was reserved for the private nurseries where plants were gathered by professional collectors from across the world, in areas as remote as China and central Asia. In London they visited the Chelsea nursery of William Bull, (or 'Mr. Bool', as James referred to him in the phonetic spelling of his diary, reflecting his Scottish pronunciation). Bull's nursery specialised in tropical plants. He invented a case for transporting coffee plant seeds from their native Liberia to other areas around the world which were suitable for their cultivation. James was more interested in Bull's orchids than his coffee seeds, but it is not clear whether he made any purchases. At Chelsea they also visited the Royal Exotic Nursery, then owned by James Veitch and Sons. This firm had existed since the 1850s and specialised in newly discovered, rare and exotic plants. Here James purchased orchids and gloxinias.

At Forest Hill, in the southeast of London, they purchased begonias from the nursery of John Laing and son. There was much concern as to whether they were sufficiently 'advanced' to face the rigours of travel to Victoria, and regrettably we do not know whether they proved to be or not. Similarly, when in Edinburgh they purchased pansies, James's favourite flower, from John Downie's nursery, which was famous for having its own palm house. Once again, we do not know if they arrived safely.

The importation of seeds and the propagation of plants did not begin for the Donaldsons with their trip to Britain. As early as 1853 they had written home to their family in Scotland requesting that they send out mustard and caraway seeds. They also requested gooseberry and mulberry seeds, and there was much discussion as to the best method of cultivation. A splendid quince tree existed at Bellevue until its demolition. The Donaldson children attributed the quince's furry fruit to the fact that the cemetery for their pet cats was located at its foot.



Peppercorns and red gum in the car park of the Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre, taken from Waterdale Road.
Photo: Tim Gatehouse

After the brothers

James Donaldson died in 1916. His first wife Jane Thomson had died in 1877, but his second wife Caroline Tiley lived until 1930. There were no children from either marriage. Wellington House was inherited by a niece. The land was gradually subdivided, and in the 1950s the remaining block on which the house and garden were located was sold. The site is now occupied by the Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre.

John Donaldson in later life took up farming in the North Island of New Zealand, where he died in 1905. He too had married twice; his first wife, Anstruther, died in 1864, and his second, Isabel, in 1931. Bellevue House passed to one of his sons, also named John, who lived on the family's farm in New Zealand. By 1958 it was found to be no longer practicable to maintain the house, and it was reluctantly sold.

After years of neglect, the ivy-clad bluestone walls, the untamed garden and collapsing aviary behind the overgrown hedge, had achieved a state of romantic decay which would have made the perfect setting for a gothic novel. But in the space of a week, bulldozers swept it all away, and suburbia marched onwards.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Miranda Vanags for finding the MMBW plan on which the locations of the Donaldson properties are shown, and to the members of the Heidelberg Historical Society their assistance and access to their files, and for permission to reproduce images in their possession.

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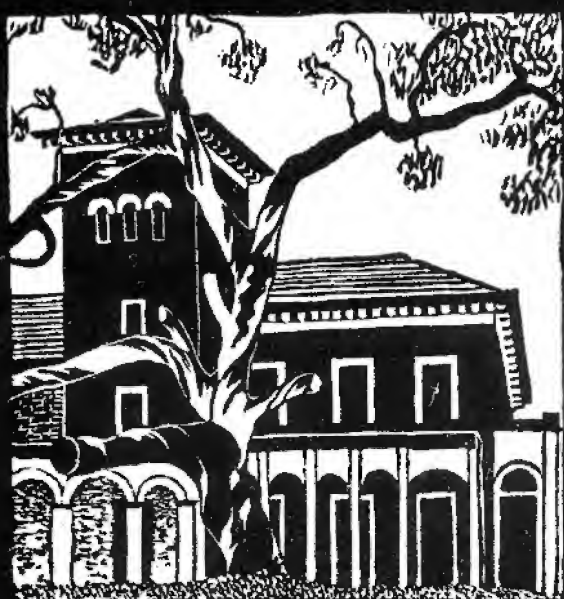
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Tim Gatehouse is a retired lawyer who is interested in the pre gold rush history of Victoria, architectural history and, more recently, the history of gardening. His articles on these subjects have appeared in various journals.



BISHOPSCOURT



Sandra Pullman

The Bishops court Corroboree Tree

Left: Woodcut of Bishops court by Theodore Woods, 1957.

Bishops court, East Melbourne, courtesy of Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Archives

Right: Garden party at Bishops court.

The Argus, 5 October 1934

The official residence of the first Bishop of Melbourne, Bishops court, was built in 1853 on Clarendon Street in East Melbourne for Bishop Charles Perry and his wife Frances. In its grounds was a magnificent river red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), which featured in an article by Wendy Dwyer in *Australian Garden History* (vol 13 no 4, 2002). Since the publication of Dwyer's article the original tree has been removed, and a seedling from the same area has now replaced it.

Standing on top of a slight rise at Bishops court in East Melbourne was a venerable old tree where the local aborigines held their corroborees. The traditional owners of the land, the Wurundjeri, liked to camp in summer where the Victorian Government's Treasury Building now is at the top of Collins Street, or on the land that is now the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Another favourite spot was on the banks of the Yarra Yarra River. The area was once grassy woodland which the early European settlers described as park-like, covered with river red gums and yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*).

In 1849 Bishop Charles Perry asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies for certain sections of land, which were granted to him. The location,

he felt, would help him 'exercise a very powerful influence in moulding the minds and taste' of the young colony (the source for this, and much other information in the present article, is Elizabeth Rushen's *Bishops court Melbourne*).

His choice of site for Bishops court might also have been influenced by the presence on a slight rise of an impressive red gum. One of the first images of the tree appears in a sketch of the Italianate house drawn by Perry's good friend Charles La Trobe, superintendent of the Port Phillip District, of nearby Jolimont.

Bishops court was designed by colonial architect James Blackburn (who had been transported to Van Diemen's Land in 1833 for forgery). One of the ideals of the Italianate style was to retain any remanent vegetation, so Blackburn incorporated the house around the huge old tree, which over time became affectionately known as the Corroboree Tree. Bishop James Moorhouse, who held the diocese from 1877 to 1886, used to sit under the tree's massive canopy to contemplate his sermons, his faithful bulldog Tim lying beside him. When Tim died he was buried near the tree, with a bluestone slab which read *In Memory of Dear old "Tim" A Comrade "True and Tried" February 2nd 1884* (Rushen p 76). Recently, Tim's headstone was put next to the new tree, close to its original position under the old Corroboree Tree.

Dating the original tree was difficult, but one of the Bishops court stories held that Ferdinand von Mueller (appointed Melbourne's first botanist in 1853) thought the tree might have been about 300 years old when the house was built.

In 1981 David Churchill (later director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne) recommended that it be included on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees, which it was, but by 1997 the Corroboree Tree was dying. On a hot January day, it dropped a huge branch that had hung over the driveway. The inside timber of the branch was rotten. In April 1997, with Heritage Victoria approval, the tree was removed. According to arborist John Fordham, the 17.5 metre tall tree was probably then 400–500 years old. It had a spread of 13 metres and a trunk diameter of 3.8 metres.

In 2002, a replacement river red gum of unknown provenance was planted at Bishops court in front the first arch of the loggia. (A loggia has an outer wall open to the elements; it is usually supported by a series of columns or arches, and faces the garden.) Unfortunately, the new sapling never thrived, because the roots had circled around themselves and the sapling had become root-bound. In 2013 a simple test was carried out by trying to rock the trunk back and forth. (If a trunk bends, then the tree is securely anchored in the ground, but if you can see the roots heaving out of the soil, something is amiss.)

After 12 years growth this tree should have been firmly anchored, but it wasn't, and it was never going to be. No-one likes removing seemingly

healthy trees — it is a tough decision to make. However, eventually this tree would have become dangerous, and valuable new tree growing time was being wasted by not removing it.

Perhaps this specimen was never meant to be because over the last few years the drought had broken and several seedlings from existing river red gums along the front fence had germinated. It is quite possible that this mature specimen was a seedling from the original Corroboree Tree. A fresh seedling was selected and planted close to the ailing sapling which was removed in 2013. However, it soon became clear while carrying out reparation work on the soil and drainage that the replacement seedling was also struggling.

It was replaced with yet another seedling from the same source. This one shot away and, after two years, this tree is more than four metres high (taller than the 12 year old tree we removed in 2013). It looks thoroughly at home, with its beautiful foliage and silvery trunk bending in the wind, and seems more resistant to insect attack than its predecessor.

While this new river red gum will never replace the dignity and character of the original Corroboree Tree, eventually it will create its own character and become a significant part of Bishops court garden.

Note: Recently the Chinese windmill palm (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) that had self-sown next to the existing red gum was moved, as it was blocking the beauty of the tree's trunks. The view from the loggia now takes in the new tree and the mature river red gum which is its parent.



Bishops court's river red gums from the loggia today, showing the thriving young tree with the relocated memorial to a devoted dog, Tim.
Photo: S Pullman 2015



Top: Bishops Court in 1904, showing the Corroboree Tree in front of the loggia on the righthand side of the house. *The Australasian*, 23 January 1904

Middle: Dorothy and Kathleen Lovett sitting on one of the branches of the Bishops Court Corroboree Tree, c1923–24. Private collection



Bottom: La Trobe's sketch of Bishops Court and the Corroboree Tree, 21 October 1853, from the southwest corner, where the original driveway is thought to have been. (Note the absence of the loggia.)

Source: Bishops Court, East Melbourne, courtesy of the Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Archives



River red gums

The river red gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* was described in 1832 by Frederick Dehnhardt, chief gardener at the Camaldoli gardens in Naples, although the species was known as *Eucalyptus rostrata* until 1956. It is the most widespread eucalypt, following watercourses usually restricted to floodplain areas such as the Murray–Darling Basin. Red gums in forests are taller, their canopy more dense and the trees closer together than in woodlands, where the extra light allows a great variety of different species such as grasses to grow.

River red gums reach 20 metres and can attain a height of 45 metres, and can possibly live to an age of 950 years (as noted by Roberts and Marston). The trees have a dual root system, with a taproot that can go nine metres down into the soil (as long as there is oxygen) for water, and a lateral root system close to the soil surface.

The trees are highly salt tolerant, especially as seedlings, and mature trees can survive up to nine months with their roots submerged in floodwaters. They are high users of water, meaning that they absorb it as if it is always plentiful, and become easily stressed during drought. At these times, many eucalypts including river red gums drop their leaves to reduce loss of water.

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The work of **Sandra Pullman** (graduate of Burnley 2005) in the La Trobe Cottage garden with the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage won the historical interpretation category of the Victorian Community History Awards in 2014. She is interested in early students at the Burnley School of Horticulture, especially Ina Higgins.

For the bookshelf

John Newton (2016) *The oldest foods on earth: a history of Australian native foods, with recipes*, New South, paperback, 272 pp, RRP \$29.99

Twenty years ago John Newton, novelist and food journalist, wrote *Wogfood*, a winning celebration of European immigrant culinary cultures. He argued that these migrants taught Australians how to eat. I would argue that the experience of these cultures in situ by travelling Anglo-Saxon Australians was what opened our hearts and stomachs to Mediterranean and Western European cuisines, and that this opened our eyes to the good dishes the immigrants brought with them. Whatever one's take on it, *Wogfood* is a lovely, inclusive argument for pluralism, for multiculturalism if you like.

Now Newton has chosen to address our ignorance of, and lack of use of the thousands of edible plants and animals that he calls 'the oldest foods on earth'. He tells a story of culinary blindness, and the book is an addendum to the revisionist histories told by Bill Gammage in *The biggest estate on earth: how Aborigines made Australia*, and by Bruce Pascoe in *Dark emu, black seeds: agriculture or accident?*

Newton's style is conversational ('about bloody time') but the tone is more that of a preacher, with hindsight as his bible. This is not to detract from his well-wrought arguments and neatly précised history lessons. Good journalist and researcher that he is, the interviews with growers, producers and chefs provide evidence and argument for the use of the foods that the Aborigines, for up to 50,000 years, have used and understood: kakadu plum or gubinge, riberry, wattlesseed, pepper berry are only a few of the better known (but still hard to purchase in their raw state) of the thousands of indigenous plants that provide nutrition and flavour.

The chapter on the producers is especially good, and the summary of arguments around what he calls 'cultural conundrums' is essential. Interviews with chefs who have broken 'new' ground by championing indigenous foods are fascinating. It is good to find Jean-Paul Bruneteau celebrated (it took a French Australian, born in 1955, to call the attitude we have inherited from the first settlers a form of 'food racism'), also Vic Cherikoff, an early, intrepid researcher and champion of native plants.

A couple of quibbles: a lazy editor allowed fear of the new to be called 'neophilia' (p 89) and most

of the recipes provided by chefs are much too complex to make an argument for the widespread use of these foods. It's that old learning from the top down conundrum that is the blight of what is still Australia's gawky culinary adolescence.

A good book, even an important book.

Gay Bilson is a writer and restaurateur.

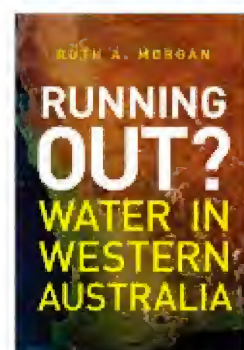
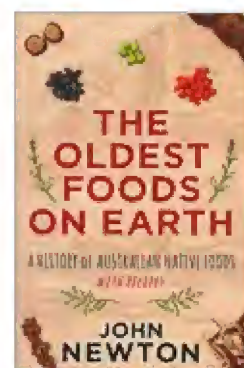
Ruth A Morgan (2015) *Running out? Water in Western Australia*, UWA Publishing, Crawley [Perth], paperback, 268 pages, RRP \$34.99, also available through www.AustralianEbookPublisher.com.au

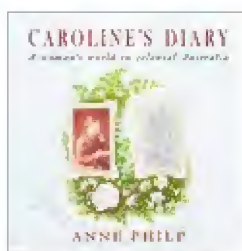
I couldn't help but read this compelling book as if it were a crime novel or a thriller. Although derived from her PhD thesis, there is nothing dry (except the climate) about Ruth Morgan's fast moving, pacey telling of the story of water and people's use and abuse of it in Western Australia.

In a chronological overview, Morgan outlines Western Australia's social, cultural and political responses to the effects of variable climate on the water supply, lifestyle and livelihoods of both rural and urban Western Australians. The long-term implications – for both the state and the nation – of the environmental impacts, resulting inevitably from misguided and sometimes politically motivated advice and legislation, are drawn out and examined. The analysis reveals a history of policies likely to exacerbate rather than solve climate change, while also contributing to related environmental and social problems.

It seems amazing, in spite of the accumulation over time of empirical and scientific evidence pointing to increasing water scarcity, and a climate becoming drier and ever more unpredictable, that such a 'defiant profligacy' in the use of water persists. This book provides, via numerous historical and current examples, a timely warning of the danger of water regimes that force an inequitable distribution of risks and costs and that shelter most urban residents from a region's environmental realities. This is a regional story about water, the most fundamental resource, with great national and global relevance.

Gina Plate is a heritage consultant and landscape designer.





Anne Philp, *Caroline's diary: a woman's world in colonial Australia*, Anchor Books Australia, Spit Junction [Sydney], paperback, x + 269 pp, RRP \$30, available at www.anchorbooksaustralia.com.au

In 1988 a box containing 24 small leather-bound diaries spanning almost 50 years was discovered at Brownlow Hill, a colonial residence, farming estate and significant garden in Camden, NSW.

Brownlow Hill's garden is well-known to AGHS members as a joint recording venture of AGHS's national management committee and the NSW branch, and as the venue for the subsequent branch visit. The diaries reveal a second AGHS connection – their author, Caroline Thomas, lived on the pastoral property of Saumarez outside Armidale. The Northern NSW sub-branch is very involved with the relocation of a heritage rose garden to Saumarez (see vol 27 no 2, 2015).

Caroline's story begins in Victorian London, where we meet a rather wilful young lady, enjoying an exhausting social whirl. Life changes dramatically when her barrister father fails to honour a significant debt. He flees England for the colony of NSW under an assumed name. His wife and eldest daughter are faced with the shame of dodging creditors while facing damning publicity in *The Times*, and needing to approach friends and relatives for money for the family's passage to NSW.

In Sydney, Caroline's diaries continue her meticulous record of potential suitors and social events but also reveal her secret longings.

When forced to accept a country governess position to assist the family finances, she writes, 'Want someone to love who will love me. Feel lonely', a lament worthy of a Jane Austin character. But life was about to change.

In 1856, Caroline's father was finally reinstated as a Sydney attorney. The family's dark period was over. Within months, Caroline was married to pastoralist Henry Arding Thomas, and embarked on the life of a loyal wife and devoted mother.

The diaries reveal her increasing maturity as she coped with an isolated rural life and the loss of several of her 11 children.

Henry purchased three rural properties with little consultation with Caroline, but she gives no hint of the loss and upheaval as she moves from Buckingham in central NSW to Saumarez near Armidale, and finally to Wivenhoe at Camden. The wilful city girl matured into a dedicated country wife.

Anne Philp has tackled a daunting and time-consuming task in transcribing the minute diary entries, many cross-written. She places this

rich family material into the context of colonial life and includes detailed property descriptions. There are occasional references to Caroline's appreciation of the gardener's efforts, but no indication that she gained pleasure from any actual work herself. Nevertheless, this is an absorbing read that widens our understanding of the challenges experienced by colonial women on properties which (in many cases) still have notable gardens which are now historically significant.

Gerri Nicholas is a social historian.



Letter to the Editor

The importance of advocacy

In his first editorial as our new chairman (vol 27 no 3), Richard Heathcote emphasised the importance of advocacy among the activities of AGHS. It was fitting that John Mulvaney's article 'Tasmania's lost 18th-century gardens' immediately followed the editorial. Mulvaney played an outstanding role in the campaign to save Recherche Bay. For more recent members it will be of interest to know that this advocacy campaign was a major focus for the AGHS nationally in the early 2000s.

In 2003 the society's national management committee began a quiet flow of letters to support the campaign to conserve Recherche Bay, a process that quickened following our request for emergency heritage listing of the area in December 2004. Ours was just one voice among many who ardently called for the conservation of this area of national and international significance. The society actively engaged with the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, distributed information to members and made a donation toward the purchase of Recherche Bay. Subsequently, members of AGHS's Tasmanian branch became involved in the process of formulating a management plan for the site.

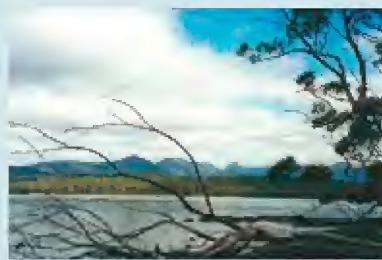
Advocacy takes energy but we have a marvellous resource in the expertise of our members. As we found with our campaign to save the French garden in its surrounding cultural landscape at Recherche Bay, advocacy can be enormously rewarding.

Colleen Morris, Sydney
(AGHS national chair 2003–09)

Erratum 'Tasmania's lost 18th-century gardens'

We apologise! Due to an editorial error, a picture was wrongly captioned in John Mulvaney's 'Tasmania's lost 18th-century gardens' in the previous issue (vol 27 no 3, p 4).

This is not a view of Adventure Bay. The view is of Recherche Bay, looking west towards Mt La Perouse from the area where the d'Entrecasteaux expedition camped in 1792.



Dialogue

Bolwarra to change hands



Why is rainforest so alluring that we want to live there? Is complexity its appeal, or calm? What is a rainforest garden? Some say gardening is 'holding a piece of land in a state of arrested ecological development'. The urge to clear, clip or control? Others see gardens as a medium to enjoy nature: a window to the world. Light-touch 'curation', influencing nature...

Aboriginal peoples could be called landscape gardeners on a grand scale. Australians have long been fascinated by the bush. Remnants often occur in spectacular terrain, a cooler, lush world in contrast to much of Australia. Many of us choose to live in or near bush, to help revive and restore its viability. This is, to some, a kind of national priority.

Illawarra rainforests have been much cleared for industry and urbanism. This region is rich botanically. Geoff and Ann Long's rainforest garden property Bolwarra (now on the market) at Foxground is a splendid example of gardening of restraint, selective removal, clearing to enjoy

spectacular views. Paths trail across 50 acres, with four waterfalls and creeks. They have planted it so that it has every Illawarra rainforest species, and birdsong is vivid. With their care, a significant piece of rainforest on private land has been protected, nourished and invigorated.

Stuart Read is a landscape architect, horticulturist and garden historian with an abiding love of plants.

Looking eastwards
from Bolwarra.
Photo: Stuart Read

'Spontaneous beauties' in Singapore

The conference 'Spontaneous beauties' on 10–12 June 2016 at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University will present international perspectives on the different aesthetic principles according to which gardens are designed, shaped and made throughout the ages. Examples include the classic gardens of China and Japan, the paradisaical enclosed gardens of medieval Europe, Mughal gardens, 18th century landscape gardens and 'Gardens by the Bay' in present-day Singapore. The conference will feature talks on the representation of gardens in literature, art, film, sociology, economics and law. A special and local focus will be the Botanic Gardens in Singapore, which have recently been made a UNESCO World Heritage site. For further details see www.hss.ntu.edu.sg/Programmes/english/spontaneousbeauties



Northern Ireland and Donegal Historic Houses and Gardens Tour

Monday 5 to Thursday 15 September 2016

You are invited to join a small group tour (max 14) that visits many private historic houses and gardens in Northern Ireland. Baronscourt, Ballyscallion Park, Benvard, Greyabbey, Glenarm Castle, Rowallan and Mt Stewart are among those we visit and meet with owners and gardeners who share their knowledge and passion about their properties.

We lunch with a Duke and Duchess, dine with Lords, Ladies and landed gentry, and learn gardening secrets from the true aristocracy of Horticulture - Head Gardeners of many years standing.

Accommodation is in characterful country house hotels with the last 2 nights spent in the grandeur of Ballywalter Park.

A reasonable amount of walking is involved. Tour begins and ends in Belfast.

Cost \$6,600 per person

Plus Single Supplement. Includes all meals.
DOES NOT INCLUDE TRAVEL TO OR FROM IRELAND.

Itinerary and Bookings

Ann Wegener (Qld branch AGHS) who will accompany the tour.
MOBILE 0407 378 585 **EMAIL** annwegener@icloud.com

New editor for AGHS's *Garden + Environment*

AGHS is delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Ruth Morgan as editor of its refereed journal (formerly *Studies in Australia Garden History*), whose new title is *Garden + Environment*. The international and interdisciplinary journal will be published online. It will serve a wide general interest in the history, heritage, and conservation of gardens, encompassing designed and cultural landscapes.



Ruth Morgan (right) with AGHS member Marion Blackwell at the 2011 Landscape Forum convened by Caroline Grant and the WA Branch of AGHS, which took place at the University of Western Australia.

Photo: Richard Aitken

'Landscapes at risk' list

As part of our mission to promote awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes, the national office of AGHS is preparing a list of 'Landscapes at risk'. There are three criteria for 'at risk'—active current threat (development approved / lack of heritage listing or consideration of landscape heritage, lack of protection during development); potential future threat (development, neglect, poor management); and lack of champions (community protest, unaware, Council/manager uninterested).

The list will be promoted to the public, strengthening the advocacy work of AGHS across Australia. The draft list, which includes Cumberland Hospital in North Parramatta, Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra and Toowoomba in Queensland, is available on our website at <https://gardenhistorysociety.org.au/news/details/175>.

Please send suggestions and comments to info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au (for postal address, see inside back cover).

Profile: John Maurer



John Maurer, and the garden of his former Armidale residence, Yarrobindi II.

Photos courtesy of John Maurer

AGHS's public officer on the national management committee has an ideal background in public education. In fact, he was elected a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators for his contribution to teacher education and international education.

Tell us about your background

I worked at the University of New England in Armidale in teacher education, and in clinical practice as a psychologist. During that time I developed an interest in mentoring and in rural education in Papua New Guinea.

How did your interest in heritage and gardens develop?

More than a quarter of a century ago my wife and I purchased Yarrobindi II, a 1914 blue brick residence in Armidale which needed much restoration. Several original trees provided the framework to build a garden suited to cold-climate conditions and the shade of mature deciduous trees. Within days of settling in, we planted a picking garden of hybrid tea roses. Thereafter, English roses, some heritage roses and early hybrid teas formed the basis of the shrubs. With winter temperatures down to minus 10 degrees celsius, the garden was filled with European and North American perennials and many winter and spring bulbs. Some rose trellises were laced with clematis. The garden was open as part of the AGHS 2013 Armidale conference, and for the former Australian Open Garden Scheme. It has been a fundraiser for AGHS and various charities. We used thousands of *Buxus* plants grown from cuttings to create miniature box hedges edging the garden beds. Thirty years on, some of our early

cuttings are now mature topiary. The house won heritage awards for restoration and sympathetic additions and, later, for landscaping.

How did you bring yourselves to leave Yarrobindi II?

Ann and I moved to Sydney 12 months ago, to be closer to extended family. It was a huge move, leaving a garden we loved and moving away from AGHS friends, but the change was made easier by volunteering with Heritage Roses in Australia. The Sydney group has monthly working bees on rescued heritage roses at the Rookwood Necropolis. The group also prunes at the Rumsey Rose Garden near Old Government House in Parramatta.

Tell us about your continuing involvement with AGHS

I was on the organising committee for the AGHS 2013 conference in Armidale, and am chair of the subcommittee for the AGHS Heritage Rose Garden at Saumarez Homestead near Armidale. Stage 1 of this garden opened in October 2015 — it is a collaboration between the Northern NSW branch of AGHS and the National Trust. One of the things I've done to help publicise the garden is the development of digital visual presentations.

And how do you see the future of AGHS?

I continue to chair the heritage rose garden subcommittee at Saumarez and enjoy my involvement, even though this now happens at a distance. I have a particular interest in renewal and succession within organisations such as AGHS. This is especially important to ensure that projects like the Saumarez garden are maintained and valued, once those who have developed them are no longer around.

Diary dates

APRIL 2016

Sunday 10 Macquarie University walk led by Craig Burton SYDNEY

2–4.30pm. Looking at the work of Walter Abraham and his mentor Richard Clough. AGHS members \$20, guests \$25 (includes light refreshments). Bookings and enquiries Jeanne@Villani.com. Please book before paying in case booked out; meeting point advised on booking.

Sunday 10 Working Bee at Longacres VICTORIA

10am start. Longacres is a large garden within a sylvan setting at Olinda. Maintenance will include hydrangea pruning and removal of ivy and holly. Morning tea and lunch provided; parking on site. Contact Fran Faul 03 9853 1369, franfaul@gmail.com for details.

Tuesday 12 Autumn lecture 'Sustainable landscapes' by Phillip Johnson VICTORIA

6pm for 6.30pm Mueller Hall, National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue. In 2013 Johnson's design of the Trailfinders Australian Garden presented by Flemings was unanimously awarded the highest possible honour at the Chelsea Flower Show, Gold and Best In Show. AGHS members \$20, non-members \$25, student card \$10 (includes light refreshments). Book at www.trybooking.com/JVHW. Enquiries Lisa Tuck 0418 590 891, lisatuck1@bigpond.com.

Saturday 16–Sunday 17 Toowoomba self-drive tour QUEENSLAND

Route includes gardens in the Pittsworth Open Gardens, and a Toowoomba-based advocacy activity.

Tuesday 26–Friday 29 Coach tour 'Autumn in the Monaro' SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

This tour to four historic gardens – Bobundara, Erindale, Shirley and Curry Flat – is fully booked. For waiting list enquiries, Ray Bradley 02 4861 4090 or aghs.sh.info@gmail.com.

Friday 29 April–Sunday 1 May Coach tour 'Autumn leaves and private gardens' VICTORIA

Tour to the Beechworth district with Heritage Victoria's tree expert John Hawker. AGHS members \$650, non-member supplement \$50, single supplement \$100 (includes all meals and morning teas). Book at www.trybooking.com/JVHX. Enquiries Lisa Tuck 0418 590 891, lisatuck1@bigpond.com.

Saturday 30 April–Sunday 1 May Self-drive tour, NSW South Coast ACT/MONARO/RIVERINA

Via Clyde Mountain, we visit Horse Island, Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens, Tilba Lake Arboretum and some private gardens. On the return journey via Brown Mountain, we visit Kameruka Estate and Lainie Lawson's beautiful garden at Nimmitabel. Cost tba, enquiries Judy Pearce 02 6257 6970, judy.pearce@netspeed.com.au.

MAY 2016

Wednesday 4 'The landscape of roads' SYDNEY

6pm for 7–8.30pm Illustrated talk by Gareth Collins, Urban Design RMS and NSW President, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill. AGHS members \$20, guests \$30 (includes light refreshments). Bookings and enquiries Jeanne@Villani.com. Please book before paying in case booked out.

Friday 13 Stephen Whiteman 'A garden for empire and nation' ACT/MONARO/RIVERINA

6pm National Library of Australia, lecture in conjunction with Friends of the National Library, for the exhibition 'Celestial Empire: Life in China, 1644–1911'. AGHS members and Friends of the Library \$15, non-members \$20 (includes refreshments). Bookings nla.gov.au/bookings/friends or 02 6262 1698. **Please note: no bookings through AGHS.**

Saturday 14 Wombat Park working bee VICTORIA

Contact Fran Faul 03 9853 1369, franfaul@gmail.com for details.

Tuesday 26–Friday 29 Self-drive tour, NSW South Coast QUEENSLAND

Visit Barambah Station and Taabinga Homestead, and Ringwood House (Nanango), designed by architect Robin Dods. For details see website.

JUNE 2016

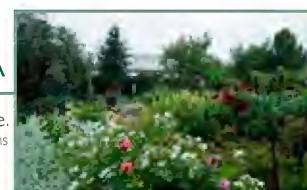
Sunday 12 Winter lecture series: 'Olive Pink's flowers' TASMANIA

2pm, Runnymede, New Town, cost tba. Gillian Ward, author of the forthcoming book *The flower paintings of Olive Muriel Pink*, will talk about her research on Olive Pink, Tasmanian-born gardener, artist, activist and anthropologist who established the Olive Pink Botanic Garden in Alice Springs. Enquiries Prue Slatyer, prueslatyer@gmail.com.

Saturday 14 Eurambeen working bee VICTORIA

Contact Fran Faul 03 9853 1369, franfaul@gmail.com for details.

Eurambeen, Victoria, site of the June working bee. Photo courtesy Eurambeen Historical Homestead and Gardens



Patron

Sue Ebury – Countess of Wilton

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Phoebe LaGerche-Wijsman

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West Australian Urban Forest Masterclass

Caroline Grant

On 2 December 2015 the West Australian Urban Forest Masterclass was held in Maylands, Perth. The event was hosted by the Australia-wide initiative 2020 Vision (which is a collaboration to make our urban areas 20 per cent greener by 2020), in partnership with the East Metropolitan Regional Council, the WA Local Government Association, the Department of Planning, Parkland WA and AECOM. The aim was to advance green space at local council level. Presentations were made by local and state government officers, arborists, researchers, the property industry and the horticulture industry. Presenters shared practical knowledge and experience, and the day finished with a team-based 'pitch to polities' workshop where four serving councillors judged hypothetical urban greening projects.

The facilitators were Jess Miller of 2020 Vision and Yvonne Lynch of the City of Melbourne. Reports of an increased canopy and improved maintenance of the urban forest in recent years were encouraging, but the complete removal of existing vegetation and laser levelling of new blocks of land is lamentable. Despite concerns expressed by local councillors, land development companies and the wider community, there have been few examples where existing vegetation has been retained in subdivisions created since the 1990s.

Increasing both the urban forest canopy and housing density presents design challenges which demand multidisciplinary analysis and action. During heat waves in Perth, the temperature is significantly lower in older leafy suburbs than new suburbs with few trees.

Moderate temperatures and green space are important for healthy communities, and for amenity. Prioritising trees in development means overriding other policies, and would necessitate reworking planning regulations.

Research into the biodiversity and health of Perth's urban forest requires further attention. Bushfires were not mentioned at the forum, despite their frequent occurrence on the urban fringe, and also in regional parks with substantial native bushland.

Throughout Australia, most of our cherished parks and green spaces are a legacy from earlier generations, and were created for the public good before today's economic tools existed. Trees which have successfully grown in parks and streets over generations are an important part of the design palette needed for new housing which is suited to our climate and social requirements. The collective wisdom of Australian Garden History Society members has much to offer in this regard.

If we recognise the values of trees and green spaces in terms of life support (oxygen), climate control, pollution mitigation and amenity, it seems obvious that our economic tools must reflect these values. We need to ask ourselves: 'What legacy do we offer future generations with the urban forest in our stewardship today?'

Caroline Grant is a landscape architect, and is writing a PhD at the University of Western Australia on the cultural landscape of the Albany region.



Mission Statement

The Australian Garden History Society promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities.